Which verses are to be scanned in such wise that the S is lost, as follows:

Doctu', fi-delis-suavis ho-mo fa-cundu' su-oque
Conten-t' atque be-atus-scitu' se-cunda lo-quens in.

I Set down and quote these words, to the end that, if it should happen that one has occasion to write in Attic letters such verses, wherein the S should disappear, one may write them clearly & wittingly without putting the said letter S where it might be lost, and put an apostrophe over the place where the S should be. This apostrophe, being above the line at the end of a word, signifies that some vowel or an S has been dropped because of the metrical quantity of the vowel that follows it in the next syllable or word. Priscian testifies, in the chapter, *De literarum commutatione,* that S very often loses its force, when he says: S *in metro apud vetustissimos vim suam frequenter amittit. Virgilius in Vndecimo Æneidos,—*

Ponite' pes sibi quisque, sed hæc quam angusta videtis.

Idem in Duodecimo,—

Inter se coiisse vir' et decernere ferro.*

**Æneid,* XI, 309, *and* XII, 709. *Priscian,* I, VII, 40, *quotes only the first four words of the first verse, but gives the second in full—'virosque,' not 'vir.' In modern editions of Virgil, the contracted forms are not used.*

'Ne' autem coniunctione sequente, cum apostropho penitus tollitur, vt Viden', Satin', Vin', pro Videsne, Satisne, Visne.

That is to say: S, in the verse of the ancient poets very often loses its force, as in the eleventh book of Virgil's *Æneid:*—

Ponite' pes sibi quisque sed hæc quam angusta videtis.

And in the twelfth book,—

Inter se coijsse vir' et decernere ferro.

In like manner, when the Latin conjunction *ne* follows S, the S is dropped altogether, and, as I said, we put an apostrophe above the line; as when we say *Viden', Satin', Vin',* for *Videsne, Satisne,* and *Visne.*

THE ladies of Paris for the most part duly observe this poetic figure, dropping the final S from many words; as when, instead of saying, 'Nous auons disne en vng Iardin, et y auons menge des Prunes blanches et noires, des Amendes doulces et ameres, des Figues molles, des Pomes, des Poires, et des gruselles,' they say, 'Nous auon disne en vng Jardin et y auon menge des prune blanche et noire, des amende

doulce et amere, des figue molle, des pome, des poyre, et des gruselle.' This fault would be pardonable in them, were it not that it passes from women to men, and that there comes to be a complete failure of perfect pronunciation in speaking.

'Tis no wonder that S sometimes loses its force, since, furthermore, the Bœotians, who are a Greek people, very often put in its place an aspirate, saying *Muha* for *Musa.* Even as, contrariwise, it is often found in place of the aspirate, as in *Semis, Sex, Septem, Se, Si, Sal,* which are written in Greek with a Δασεια, that is to say, an apostrophe which stands for the aspirate and must be written above the Greek vowels and *Rho,* as Priscian informs us, in his first book, wherein he treats *De literarum commutatione,* when he says: *Sæpe vero pro aspiratione* S *ponitur in his dictionibus quas a Græcis sumpsimus, vt Semis, Sex, Septem, Se, Si, Sal; nam Hemis, Hex, Heptem, He, Hi, Hals apud illos aspirationem habent in principio. Adeo autem cognatio est huius literæ, id est* S *cum aspiratione quod pro ea in quibusdam dictionibus solebant Bœotes idem pro* S, H *scribere, Muha pro Musa dicentes.**

* I, VII, 42. *Priscian writes Hemis, etc., in Greek characters. His text varies slightly from Tory's version.*

WHoso should desire full knowledge of the varying nature and attributes of this letter S, can find a sufficiency thereof most elegantly set forth in the fourth book of the Grammar of Aldus, in the third section [*tertius modus*] of the Chapter '*De septem modis communium syllabarum.*'

THIS letter S, as I said but now, is called in Greek Σιγμα, παρα το σιζειν, that is to say, to make a hissing sound, of the same quality that red-hot iron makes when it is dipped in water. Sigma, therefore, signifies silence, for which reason the ancients often wrote it alone above the door of the place where they ate and drank with their good friends; in order to put it before their eyes that such words as they should speak at table must be spoken soberly & listened to in silence; which cannot be if there be excess in eating and drinking, which are things not meet for decency at table & for pleasant company. Whereupon Martial says in one of his ingenious epigrams:—

Accedent sine felle ioci, nec mane timenda
Libertas, et nil quod tacuisse velis.
De Prasino conuiua meus Venetoque loquatur,
Nec faciant quenquam pocula nostra reum.†

† *Epigrams,* X, XLVIII, 21.

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